

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Edited by Glenda Acland

**Australian Archives, *Relations in Records: A Guide to Family History Sources in the Australian Archives*. Canberra. AGPS, 1988. 161pp. ISBN 0644 06847 7. \$19.95.**

Since the late 1960s family historians have come to the Archives Office of New South Wales in ever-increasing numbers. One of the main reasons for this interest (which reached boom proportions in the late 1970s and early 1980s) has been the Office's extensive holdings of records relating to the arrival of convicts, passengers and immigrants in New South Wales. The first response to this increase in demand was to microfilm the most heavily-used records (commencing in 1968) but it soon became apparent that some kind of guide other than a traditional inventory was needed to assist researchers in locating records which had originated in a number of different creating agencies. Thus, in 1970, the Archives Authority produced the first of its "subject guides", the *Guide to Convict Records*, and this (along with the *Guide to Shipping and Free Passenger Records*) has proved to be one of the most popular and heavily-used of the Authority's publications.

The appearance of a comprehensive guide to the Australian Archives' holdings of records relevant to family history will therefore be warmly welcomed by genealogists and reference archivists alike. For many years staff on our reference desk have been referring readers to the Australian Archives for shipping, naturalisation, customs, postal and other records but few outside the Australian Archives itself would have been aware of the quantity and variety of other useful records available. That researchers can now approach any regional office with confidence, fully aware of its holdings and armed with specific references is a tribute to the efforts of Lorraine Macknight and others involved in this worthwhile project.

The high quality of the guide and the amount of work involved in its preparation and production are clearly evident, even from a cursory glance. The title *Relations in Records—A Guide to Family History Sources in the Australian Archives* unambiguously indicates the scope and purpose of the publication, and the foreword neatly summarises the relevance of the Australian Archives to family historians. For the guide itself a broad subject approach has been adopted, and the table of contents provides a concise overview, in many cases allowing users to refer immediately to the relevant chapter.

The section *For the Beginner* gives essential practical advice on preparatory work, background reading, and keeping full and accurate records. The importance of a researcher posing questions as to when, how and where an ancestor may be linked with a Commonwealth activity is rightly emphasised—too often researchers experience unnecessary difficulties and frustrations through using official records without considering their historical or administrative context. The *Introduction* which follows includes useful background information on the history and functions of the Australian Archives, advice on how to gain access to the records and on using the guide, and most importantly, a clear and concise account of the Archives' control systems and finding aids. Sound advice on citation (with numerous examples) concludes this excellent section.

The main body of the guide lists records under the headings: *Immigration and Shipping, Defence, Population and Commonwealth Government Employees*. The main headings are divided into various sub-categories, and each of these includes an overview of the records, a description of the various series, brief comments on the records held by each regional office, and detailed lists of the records themselves (in table form). The tables are well set out and easy to use, enabling researchers to quickly scan all the holdings relating to a particular topic, while including all essential details (title, date range, control number). Reference is made, where appropriate, to related records held by other institutions (usually State Archives), although the extensive holdings of the Archives Office of New South Wales relating to ships' movements, crew lists and other mercantile marine records are not mentioned.

The guide concludes with a select list of useful addresses, details of Australian Archives leaflets and finding aids, a good bibliography and a comprehensive index, *Relations in Records* is undoubtedly a model of its kind—well-researched, attractively presented (with an excellent selection of illustrations), easy to use and including all the essential information required for fruitful genealogical research in the Australian Archives. It will certainly be required reading for the dedicated genealogist, and a most useful reference tool for any library or archival institution which includes family historians among its readers.

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**Australian Archives, *Relations in Records: A Guide to Family History Sources in the Australian Archives*. Canberra. AGPS, 1988. 161pp. ISBN 0644 06847 7, \$19.95.**

This book is a welcome production by Australian Archives as a guide to family historians using its records. The popularity of family and local

history, stimulated in no small measure by the recent Bicentennial celebrations, has resulted in an assault on record repositories throughout the country as eager researchers keenly seek the origins of people and the development of places and institutions. One of the first lessons which must be learnt by such enthusiasts is that each archive or library has its own system, with access facilitated by an understanding of each structure, starting with the creation of each record, its organisation and ultimately its retrieval. To this end, it is pleasing that part of the *Introduction* has been devoted to such explanations and the diagrammatic representation of the Commonwealth Record Series system is a great asset.

The Guide has been divided into four sections: *Immigration and Shipping; Defence; Population* and *Commonwealth Government Employees*, all of which are areas of paramount interest to family historians. The contents list clearly indicates the scope of the records and it is apparent that these need to be used in conjunction with material held by individual state archives. A section at the end of the book containing *Useful Addresses* and a *Select Bibliography* achieves little because of obvious omissions and old information. (The John Oxley Library in Queensland well-publicised the closure of its William Street address on 21 Jan 1988 for removal to the Cultural Centre Complex on the Southbank, many months before this publication was released. Also there are two major genealogical societies in Brisbane, let alone a plethora of country and suburban societies in all states.) The index is quite comprehensive but for some reason omits the word "Index" to indicate readily just what records are indexed.

The book underlines that the Archives is not bound by the year 1901 when Federation occurred but in many instances that a great deal of nineteenth century material is held.

The *Immigration* section is of most use after the 1945 establishment of the Department of Immigration whereas for the earlier period, 1901-1945 the Australian Archives records are mainly concerned with non-British immigrants. Passenger lists and cards cover not only shipping records but after 1940 also include the lists from aircraft arriving in Australia. Details vary within time periods but crew lists, departing passengers, immigrants to territories, displaced persons and British armed forces personnel are on record. In addition information can be found on quarantine, migrant accommodation, passports, merchant shipping and lighthouses among complementary records. Naturalisation material dates from 1904 except for Victoria (1847), and South Australia (1848).

The Defence records are mainly from the twentieth century but there are also many from the latter part of the nineteenth century. Inquirers are also referred to the deposits held by the Central Army Records Office, Melbourne, the Australian War Memorial and the Department of Defence. The two main categories described in *Relations in Records* cover Defence

force enlistment and pay records and Defence agencies correspondence series. Details are then supplied for various time periods: pre 1914; 1914-18 war; inter war, 1919-39; 1939-45 war; and post 1945. A final sub-section lists repatriation records.

Section 3 is devoted to *Population*. It starts with general sources such as census and electoral rolls and then moves to material associated with particular individuals such as Aborigines and Territorians. The section also includes some fascinating information on honours and awards; patents, trademarks and copyright; investigative files; and bankruptcy records.

The last area, *Commonwealth Government Employees* deals mainly with sources for civilian personnel employed under the Public Service Act. Users are warned that certain details in original records may be restricted from access if they constitute unreasonable disclosure of personal affairs or a breach of confidence. However from printed sources it is possible to ascertain the date of an individual's appointment to the Commonwealth public service, and the division, date and department of employment at retirement or termination of service. Then this information may be supplemented from further departmental records depending on the access restrictions.

In 1981 the Public Record Office in Britain released Jane Cox and Timothy Padfield's, *Tracing your ancestors in the Public Record Office* (Her Majesty's Stationery Office), which has now run to several editions. Comparison between the two volumes, which is viable because both were produced for a similar audience by comparable institutions (accepting that many records in the PRO are not held by the much younger Australian government), reflects a difference in approach between the two bodies. The British book covers dozens of different categories whereas the Australian one is limited to four; the PRO publication is not so expensively produced, priced according to its market and of a more useful size for library shelves. On the other hand, the Australian one is beautifully illustrated and the reproduction of documents is most valuable.

However, this production is over-generous; several of the Tables run to many pages (for example, Table 5 takes 13 pages) which hinders efficient consultation.

Anyone wishing to use the copious material available at Australian Archives should consult this book for its description of the required records before even setting foot on the premises. At a price of \$19.95 most family history societies will stock the book in their libraries but with the large number of reference books now available to individual researchers, it is to be regretted that only the dedicated will buy a personal copy.

Australian Archives has an obligation to service the needs of ministers of the crown and government departments before the requests of members of the public and family historians are not always cheerfully welcomed.

The system is not easy for novices and researchers should be aware that few records have been indexed. The release of this book provides a long-awaited opportunity to do some homework before visiting the repository. This is a positive development and one which family and local historians must use to their advantage—up until now we have blamed the staff at Australian Archives, now we must assume some responsibility ourselves.

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**Carmen Crespo Nogueira, editor, *Glossary of Basic Archival and Library Conservation Terms*, ICA Handbook Series, Volume 4. München. K.G. Saur, 1988. 151pp. ISBN 3598 202768. \$50. (Available in Australia from Butterworths Pty Ltd., P.O. Box 345, North Ryde, N.S.W. 2113).**

This publication aims to advance the exchange of information on conservation subjects by providing definitions of terminology commonly found in archival and library conservation literature. The committee responsible recognises that it is only a starting point and hopes that it will be a “point of departure for glossaries of greater scope”.

The volume certainly meets the criteria for a glossary, providing succinct definitions which clearly differentiate between terms which are often mistakenly regarded as synonymous. For example, *encapsulation* is defined as “the use of a clear inert film such as polyester for the manufacture of protective jackets or envelopes for individual documents”. This definition reinforces the concept of encapsulation as the process of merely inserting or suspending an item between polyester in comparison to *lamination* which is described as the “action of *uniting* layers of material by means of heat and/or pressure, by adhesive, or solvent”. It is hoped that armed with such clear-cut definitions, those of us working in the field will be able to dispel once and for all the myth that encapsulation and lamination are related as they both involve sealing documents between plastic sheets!

One aspect which could be improved is the cross-indexing. For example, under *adhesives*, the reader could be directed to glue, paste and gum. While in many cases the reader will have sufficient knowledge to enable them to try synonymous terms, occasionally confusion reigns while the reader struggles with a mental block. After reading the entry for *cleaning*, which gives a broad definition for the removal of dirt, stains, etc, I decided to check what had been put down for *surface cleaning*, only to find no entry. It was inconceivable that this hadn't been included, so where was it? It seemed quite obvious when I found it under *Dry cleaning* as the term is commonly used, but this example does demonstrate the advantage of extensive cross-indexing, especially for those moments when the “old grey matter” is having difficulties.

Another minor inconsistency relates to the inclusion of opinions or qualifications on the use of products or processes. While overjoyed to read that “the use of *pressure-sensitive tape* is not generally recommended for archival and library conservation” it was a little disappointing that similar qualifications hadn’t been included to warn of the limitations of *accelerated aging*, the destructive capacity of *alum/rosin sizing* or the problems relating to *lamination*, particularly of the *heat-seal* kind. While such information is not essential to the definitions, it is always advisable to provide warnings especially where the use of a particular product or process can promote deterioration.

In the interest of provoking food for thought for a revised edition or for another glossary, there appear to be a number of definitions which need further clarification. A few examples are as follows:

- Although *acid-free paper* and *alkaline reserve* are both defined, the distinction between them is often unclear to the uninitiated. It may be helpful to cross-index the terms, adding a qualification that acid-free paper need not be alkaline buffered (as in the case of photographic storage quality paper), and that alkaline reserve does not imply that a material is acid free.
- The definition of *bleeding* doesn’t include loss of colour from the ink, and this is a common interpretation of the term in Australia.
- While the definition of *deacidification* does indicate that the process removes or reduces acid, it is not emphasised strongly enough that non-aqueous methods only *buffer*, they don’t remove acidity.
- *Delamination* only refers to reversal of the lamination process, but omits the condition where a laminar material is beginning to separate. If this is referred to elsewhere it should be cross-indexed.
- *Inlay* is defined in book-binding terms only. The process whereby a document is mounted in a window or cut-out frame for protection and viewing from both sides has been omitted.
- *Tacking iron* is also commonly known as a heated spatula. This could be included and cross indexed.

In future editions there will probably be many additional terms defined. A few suggestions include *diazotype*, *heliograph*, *gamma radiation*, *heliotype*, *polyester film* and *iron-gall ink*. The list is endless, but the challenge is there, waiting for someone else to carry on this worthwhile project. The Committee is to be congratulated for its effort in providing a much needed tool to aid communication.

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**Anna Christina Ulfsparré**, *The Management of Business Records*, ICA Handbook Series, Volume 8. München. K.G. Saur, 1988. 72pp. ISBN 3598 202806. \$50. (Available in Australia from Butterworths Pty Ltd., P.O. Box 345, North Ryde, N.S.W. 2113).

*The Management of Business Records* is Volume 8 of the International Council of Archives Handbook series. It is a brief practical guide to the principles and techniques of archives administration and records management presented in the framework of a business environment. While companies are becoming aware of the advantages to be gained from the efficient administration of their records those usually placed in charge of handling this important resource are often untrained and unaware of the most fundamental procedures required for good management. This publication is a reasonable starting point for those faced with this responsibility.

It is a small volume of 72 pages and has been produced in hard cover which certainly enhances its value as a permanent reference tool. However, its brevity has meant that subjects dealt with in its ten chapters are looked at fairly succinctly. Issues are usually covered by presenting solutions or methods which could be introduced, or in the case of the chapter on microfilm, giving an overview of this subject and then asking pertinent questions which would assist the archivist in deciding whether material should be copied. Unfortunately a bibliography has not been included which would have enhanced the publication's value as an introductory reference point to more comprehensive works.

The presentation of methods to carry out particular task is one of the most valuable features of the book. In chapter 1, *Records and Archival Management. General Approach*, the author presents a plan for the "processing (handling), filing, storing, retention and destruction of records". Advice is given on making an inventory of all existing records, compiling a retention schedule, destroying those scheduled for destruction and transferring the non current records to special records or archival storage areas. Information is also provided on making a guide to the archives. The chapter is supported by examples of forms which could be used for the inventory and schedule, then concludes with a list of five tasks required for the introduction of basic order into business records and for the establishment of rules and guidelines to control their growth, management and final storage.

The important question of appraisal is addressed in various places throughout the publication. In a chapter entitled *Records Retention* four reasons why records should be permanently preserved are presented in three pages with discussion being followed by a list of the types of information about the company which should be kept for historical purposes. Appraisal is also looked at in the chapters on plans, drawings, maps and photographs and machine readable-records and in the chapter *Research and the*

*Company* the new “humanistic traditions” in history are considered in relation to business activities and records created. Readers will be assisted by a list of 117 types of records recommended for permanent preservation in an appendix.

The areas of storage and conservation are also touched upon. While it is acknowledged that treatment for extensive damage has to be handled by experts simple guidelines on methods for removing adhesive tape, cleaning dirty paper, repairing tears and broken covers, inserting loose sheets and dealing with damage caused by damp and insects are given.

Two suggestions on how to handle particular record types deserve special comment—those relating to accounting and machine-readable records.

Accounting records are usually bulky and make up a large part of the company’s total record holdings. The retention of these records is regulated to a large extent by government legislation, with the decision on what to keep permanently being left to the archivist. To be able to make these decisions there must be a sound general knowledge of the company’s accounting procedures. Chapter 9 provides a good starting point in acquiring this information. An excellent summary is given of the basic books of account and as well an overview of the historical development of accounting from the single entry to the double entry system. Of further assistance is a chart comparing traditional to EDP accounting systems.

Computers were first used by businesses for accounting procedures and have expanded rapidly into other areas. The chapter on machine-readable records looks at the functions of a computer, the need to obtain documentation on the systems used, appraisal difficulties, storage and suggestions on compiling an inventory and making a guide. Again as with other sections of the book this is only an overview of the requirements for managing this type of record, but the details present a framework for the archivist to commence the task of retention control to ensure the survival of archival records.

Overall, this publication is an excellent introduction to archival theory and practice for someone new to the area. It provides immediately accessible information that will facilitate further study of more comprehensive specialist publications. It should be kept in mind, however, that it concentrates on the practices and techniques for controlling business records and does not cover the requirements for managing an archival organisational unit. This is the standard approach in the field— one which is clearly defensible in terms of the range and depth of the specialist management literature available. It would be useful, however, if the



International Council on Archives were to include a volume in this series along the lines of *An Introduction to Issues in the Management of an Archival Organisation*.

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**Seamus Helferty and Raymond Refaussé (Editors), *Directory of Irish Archives*.** Dublin. Irish Academic Press, 1988. 112pp. £19.95 (hard back), £9.95 (paper back).

In the last decade, largely at the instigation of societies of archivists, several directories to archival repositories or resources have either been prepared or up-dated. These directories can:

- provide comprehensive international/national/regional coverage;
- be format based; or
- be guides to archives of particular institutions (for example, church archives).

This volume falls into the first category—it is a directory to archives in Ireland (covering both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland). It contains 155 entries, preceded by a short introduction and followed by six pages of indices and an appendix.

A declaration of my expectations of a directory may be worth articulating before going too much further. A directory should be comprehensive, its structure and presentation should facilitate and encourage its use, and it should contain sufficient information to enable users to determine whether or not to pursue their enquiries at a particular institution.

### **Comprehensiveness**

As an Australian who has undertaken no research in Ireland and is unfamiliar with the archival landscape, I find it difficult to comment on its comprehensiveness. However, having cross checked entries with the British directory, *British Archives: A Guide to Archive Resources in the United Kingdom*<sup>1</sup> (limited though its Irish coverage is), and other references there appear to be no obvious omissions. The editors have taken care to include in the appendix a list of those institutions and organizations which they believed held archives but which did not respond to their questionnaire. This is a desirable feature, in my view, in all directories.

The editors conclude their introduction to the *Directory* with the statement that it “makes no pretence to be a totally comprehensive guide to Irish archives. It is rather an introduction to the many scattered locations where primary source material for the study of Irish history can be found.”

A disclaimer of this sort is always wise. Particularly as the editors specifically excluded three groups from the publication – trade unions (because the Irish Labour History Society was conducting a survey of them), business organizations (because details can be obtained from the Business Records Survey of the Irish Manuscripts Commission) and family archives (because of difficulties of identifying their existence and of negotiating access).

Directories have to be selective at one level or another. Consequently, these omissions are not of particular concern as they have been declared. However, with overseas or remote users of the volume in mind, it would have been useful for contact addresses or citations to have been included for the Irish Labour History Society and the Irish Manuscripts Commission. It may also have been a useful precaution for the index entries under “trade unions” and “business records” to have referred the reader to the page of the introduction which explains the general omission of these organizations.

### **Structure and presentation**

The 155 entries are arranged alphabetically by the title of the institution/organization. The entry for each institution or organization is numbered. Aside from the appendix listing non-responding institutions thought to have archives there are two indices – one a county index, the second a subject index.

Each institutional or organizational entry has the following fields – address, telephone, the position to which enquiries should be referred, opening hours and facilities, guides and major collections. The structure and layout of entries has been patterned on those in the British directory, *British Archives*<sup>1</sup>.

Entries are clearly and attractively set out. Generally, the largest text field for an entry is that for “major collections”. There is always a danger that entries with a great deal of information to include in fields of this kind are difficult to scan. However, the editors have overcome the problems in these instances with thoughtful paragraph formatting, for example, indenting.

### **Information/content**

Essentially, directories have two categories of users – researchers who are trying to identify the range and scope of source material, and archivists and librarians either acting as intermediaries for researchers/donors, or trying to establish whereabouts of related collections.

These constituencies are well served by the entries. A particularly useful feature of the major collections field is that it actually names major collections and, usually, provides the date range for the collections cited (for example, “letters and papers of and relating to James Joyce

1882-1941”). A drawback, however, is that the entries provide no general information about the access policy(ies) governing the major collection(s) listed.

My major misgiving about the volume lies with its index. There is no nominal index. Therefore, the scores of people and organizations cited in entries can only be accessed by subject. To use James Joyce as an example, you look up “literary papers” not “Joyce”. The subject index does enable you to identify formats such as photographs and maps. However, there is no entry for plans or for film (there is one for cinema but it indexes only one of the institutions with holdings of film) despite both of these formats being cited in entries. Additionally, holdings of maps have only been indexed if specific reference to the format is made in a particular entry. This may seem very logical. However, it has meant, for example, that the entry for the Office of Public Works is not indexed under maps although I presume that it must have holdings of maps and plans.

### Conclusion

The editors cite the reasons for the compilation of the *Directory* as the lack of coverage in British directories. This lack of coverage is more significant because of the poor public funding for archives in Ireland. The consequences, they argue, are that there are no strong regional collecting institutions, that archives remain with their creators and their existence is not well documented or publicized.

Despite my minor reservations the *Directory* is a solid reference text which should go a long way to promoting Irish archives. The editors (and their assistants) worked with admirable speed to devise and circulate the questionnaire and to compile and submit the text for publication. We should welcome this addition to our knowledge of overseas archives.

1. Janet Foster and Julia Sheppard (editors), *British Archives: A Guide to Archive Resources in the United Kingdom* London. Macmillan Press, 1984.

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**David T. Hawkings**, *Bound for Australia*. Chichester. Phillimore, 1987. 269pp. £12.95

The stated purpose of David Hawkings’ book is “to enable the descendant of a convict to trace his ancestor and to discover as much as possible about that individual’s personal life and crime; his (or her) journey to New South Wales; and his (or her) life in the colony”. It is a timely effort, given the increasing interest in family history associated with Bicentennial celebrations.

Hawkings has produced a book which will help those wishing to trace a convict ancestor from conviction in England or Wales to arrival and later life in Australia. It should also help those whose forbears were free settlers. It focuses in particular on records held in the Public Record Office in London but also refers to the holdings of local record offices where necessary. What makes it especially useful for readers in Australia is the inclusion of details of Australian libraries' holding of microfilm copies of the records described. The book does not include references to original records held in Australia which are covered in other books.

It opens with a brief account of the transportation system and of the case study used to illustrate the stages of and sources for a typical search. These range from inclusion in a calendar of prisoners prior to trial to the noting in the 1828 Census of NSW of a grant of conditional pardon. The records used in the author's own search are briefly described, with references to later chapters containing more detail (including transcripts and facsimilies of all types of documents mentioned) and to appendices giving the locations and archival references of the records. Particularly useful is a table on pp. 8-10 showing clearly the sequence of documents to be searched. The subject index enables ready access to specific information.

The book is not above criticism. I found its arrangement confusing because of the overlap between some chapters and the appendices; it is not immediately obvious where information should be sought. It is disconcerting to find on pp. 217-218 a double-columned list reproduced on two pages in such a way that each column continues over the page. Less forgivable is the lack of page numbers on some pages of facsimilies. Facsimilies do not bear their archival references so the text must be searched for this information. There are also some curious omissions e.g. minute books of the Palatinate of Lancaster Crown Court (PL 28) are a more useful source than the assize rolls (PL 25) for much of the period in question but are not mentioned at all in Appendix 4.

However, these minor criticisms should not detract from the overall welcome which should be accorded to a book which sheds light on a confusing subject for the beginner and the more experienced researcher alike.

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**Conference Papers.** *Off the beaten track, Archifacts, 1988/2*, Archives and Records Association of New Zealand, June 1988. 64pp. \$NZ6.00 for single issue; subscriptions to *Archifacts* through membership of the Association.

*Archifacts 1988/2* consists of selected papers from the 11th annual conference of the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand, held in Christchurch in August 1987. The theme of the conference was *Off the beaten track*. The twelve papers deal with the curation or use of materials other than the files and manuscripts which predominate in most archives. The papers are a valuable reminder that the archival responsibility extends over documentation with a great variety of informational content and physical format.

The responsibility has many headaches and frustrations as the articles on the respective collections indicate. Clive Sowry describes the painstaking work involved in identifying films by examination of their physical characteristics. Josie Laing traces the development of the Canterbury Museum Map Collection which, before the 1980's, had only one indexed collection and "insurmountable" space and storage difficulties. The Herbarium at Lincoln, whose story is told by Bryony Macmillan, was established in 1928 but not housed in a purpose-designed building until 1960. A regional archives for Westland did not take shape until the 1980's and the task of "Gathering Westland's Archives", described by Anne Hutchinson, has involved not only local collecting but also the retrieval or copying of material scattered among many New Zealand and overseas repositories. David Colquhoun describes the difficult history of the New Zealand war art collection, began in 1918 and severely fragment until responsibility for its administration passed to the National Archives in 1981.

Despite the difficulties of inadequate finance, staff and storage equipment and space, much has been achieved in all the collections through the interest, commitment and optimism of dedicated curators and volunteers. Above all, the joy of working with unique materials shines encouragingly through every article. It is nicely encapsulated in Ken Scadden's paper on map curatorship when he quotes Robert Louis Stevenson as writing: "I am told there are people who do not care for maps and I find it hard to believe". Perhaps it is the very suspicion of that enjoyment which makes bureaucrats and corporate sponsors reluctant to fund archival endeavours!

It is of course the use of collections which ultimately justifies their existence. As in other countries, New Zealanders are increasingly discovering new areas of research for which archival collections are invaluable, as discussed in the articles on sport history (Len Richardson) and architectural history (Pam Wilson). Roger Collins contributes an interesting article on the use of pictorial sources, an area in which there are many pitfalls for unwary players, including archivists. Collins was advised by the Director of the Netherlands State Archives that the one leaf Blok Fragment of the Tasman voyage journal was without interest: "Did he feel thus because it bears no text and only pictures? In fact, a

careful comparison convinced me that the single leaf was in fact the original, and that the illustrations in the full journal were copied from the Blok manuscript. I had, to my own satisfaction (and understandable excitement), discovered the oldest European pictures of New Zealand”.

The most fascinating articles are a contribution to the debate about “Was 19th Century Maori Society Literate?” (Lyndsay Head and Buddy Mikaere) and Lyndsay Head’s article about the papers of Thomas Ritchie. He lived on the Chathan Islands for 59 years and his papers include a collection of personal letters, 1869 to 1932, written in Maori to him by Maori and Moriori, the only collection of its kind known to exist. The articles demonstrate the importance of recognising Maori literacy and of making those manuscripts which do exist known and accessible, especially to Maori. Head and Mikaere end their article with a direct appeal to the archival community: “If Maori writing is denied to competent researchers, whatever their race, then it is Maori people who are going to suffer most, because it traps us in the windowless house of the authorised version— both Pakeha and Maori . . . Please help to make the future different from the past”.

New Zealand rarely figures in the consciousness of Australian archivists. There are, however, many interesting developments occurring across the Tasman, some of which are dealt with in this collection of conference papers. The volume makes it clear that greater interaction would be to our mutual benefit.

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**Marianne Dacy, (comp.), Jennifer Alison, Alan Crown and Neil Radford, (eds.) *Archive of Australian Judaica— Holdings to 1988*. Monograph No. 5, 33p., 1988, ISBN 0-86758-249-9.**

Access to the collection in the Archive of Australian Judaica is through the Rare Book Section of the Fisher Library of the University of Sydney. The Archive, which collects and preserves material created by Jews in Australia or records Jewish experience from an Australian perspective, has been in operation for just under six years, funded mainly by Government grants, by donations and responses to appeals, by the Friends of the Archive, and the Jewish Community.

Several years ago, however, ARGs Australian Government research funding was withdrawn from this kind of project, and the Archive has had to rely on the latter for income.

Notwithstanding the precarious nature of the enterprise, the Archive employs a part-time archivist, Sister Marianne Dacy, and in the short duration of its existence has achieved the arrangement and description of:

- individual collections;
- deposited or solicited organisational records (from agencies set up to represent sections of the Jewish community);
- community records (from congregations belonging to synagogues);
- a photographic collection;
- a collection of Australian Yiddish Literature;
- audio-visual material;
- current periodicals (communities and organisations);
- current annual reports (communities and organisations);
- theses and other publications;
- ephemera.

The preface proposes that an archives is “only as useful as its catalogue”, and then that a “catalogue” should be updated periodically for the collection to be usable and accessible. In keeping with this idea, and with what one would imagine are the omnipresent budget constraints, this publication is a no-frills production consisting of pages and softcover stapled together. The emphasis is very much on the content, and on provision of information about the holdings. As only one of the categories, *Individual Collections*, has a ‘call-number’ or address, (in the form of the Shelf List number), this monograph is perhaps intended to be more of an inventory of the collections, than a finding-aid.

The contents are divided much as listed above, with good cross-referencing to indicate that some of the material can be entered under more than one heading. For example, many of the photographs emanate from *Individual Collections*; some records of the organisations remain under the aegis of their collector, but are entered also under *Organisational Archives*. There is a handy index of subjects covered in *Individual Collections*, for researchers with a topic which may be catered for by several collections, and each entry has an explanatory note about the donor/organisation which, in most cases, illuminates the material. Other data included are the date range, the quantity in box terms and, generally, the form the records take.

The descriptions of the *Individual* and *Organisational Collections* are, however, written with a specific researcher in mind: one who is *au fait* with Hebrew terms such as *Shaliach* (Shelf List 11, page 4), and *Shephelah* (Shelf List 15, page 4) or with personalities and movements such as Wallenburg (Shelf List 34, page 8) and *Bnai Akivah* and *Habonim* (page 11), or who can recognise organisations such as the ZFANZ and the ECAJ by their acronyms (Shelf List 31, page 7). In order to avoid the esoteric nature of the notes, a glossary of terms and a list of names of

individuals/organisations, including a brief explanation of each, is recommended.

If one of the aims of inventories is the edification of researchers, the archivist/compiler has succeeded in this. Readers of this modest publication will be possessed of sufficient information about its holdings to enable them to visit the Archive of Australian Judaica and request source material for perusal. More significant, perhaps, is that other objective, the provision of a publication, however unassuming, which attests to considerable achievements attained, in the face of adversity, in a short period of time.

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**Australian Archives, *Investigating the value of Commonwealth records: A self-help handbook for Commonwealth agencies.*** Canberra. Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987. 39pp. ISBN 0644 06500 1.

The main title of this booklet is perhaps rather misleading although the sub-title, *A self-help appraisal handbook for Commonwealth agencies*, more accurately describes the purpose of the work. The book essentially consists of two parts although it is not actually divided in such a way internally. The first part deals with some general aspects of records appraisal and disposal, such as its rationale and function within an organisation's operations as well as some practical advice and guidance on how to approach and undertake the appraisal process. The second part is basically a set of step by step guidelines and advice on completing the Australian Archives 'Standard Appraisal Report' for the establishment of disposal classes in agency held records.

Although this booklet is designed for officers in Commonwealth agencies who are undertaking the appraisal of records it is not always clear exactly who it is really aimed at; at times it almost seems to be mainly concerned with providing a justification to agency management for agencies having any sort of records appraisal and disposal program as part of their overall records management operation. The discussions in the booklet are often very detailed, although somewhat unevenly so, and the level of detail apparent in suggestions such as "arrange meetings at a time convenient to action officers . . ." or "now go to the area which uses the records . . .", appears at times to be disconcertingly excessive.

This is however, consistent with the "chatty" approach taken throughout and the use of cartoons to reinforce the message of the text. In this respect it gives the impression of something that had its genesis as a talk or lecture



given at a workshop on appraisal for agency personnel, which at times translates a little oddly to the stand-alone printed format. One area which could perhaps have been discussed in more detail in view of the self-help nature of the booklet is that of the differences between a disposal class and a record series, particularly the possible implications for disposal action and agency records management of disposal classes within the same series having different values and retention periods.

While I am not really in a position to assess the effectiveness of this booklet from the point of view of Commonwealth agency staff for whom it was produced, it is likely to provide a useful basic description of the records appraisal process and the sort of issues which need to be considered by anyone in an organisation who is charged with the responsibility for making an initial assessment of that organisation's records.

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**Anne Robertson**, *Treasures of the State Library of New South Wales: the Australian Collections*. Sydney, Collins in association with the State Library of New South Wales, 1988. 194p. \$19.95

The Mitchell Library is undoubtedly the best known and richest repository of historical and literary treasures in Australia. In keeping with its pre-eminence, its story has been told and its treasures described more often—in 1906, in 1933, in 1978 and now in Anne Robertson's work—than is the lot of many similar institutions.

The history of the Mitchell Library (and, let us not forget, its worthy though less well known companions, the Dixson Library and Galleries) is reasonably familiar to librarians and archivists and, it is to be hoped, to those who use the collections. In the first chapter of this book, Miss Robertson describes (as well as can be done, given the ironically frequent lack of sources) David Scott Mitchell's moneyed and cultured family *milieu*, his successful studies at the then fledgling University of Sydney and subsequent active social life, and his ultimate withdrawal from society to become a reclusive and obsessive collector.

In 1871, aged 35, Mitchell established the bachelor residence at 17 Darlinghurst Road which he was to occupy for the rest of his life. Few people, and those chiefly booksellers, visited this home which he filled to overflowing with his fabulous collection of books, manuscripts and pictures. He left the house for little other than his regular Monday morning tour of Sydney's bookshops. (He was known to the cabbies of Sydney as "Old Four-Hours".)

Mitchell's first serious collecting interest was English literature, though he soon turned his prescience and persistence toward Australiana. His aim, ultimately, was to gather a copy of every document, in whatever format, relating to Australia, the south-west Pacific, the East Indies and Antarctica. In this he was encouraged and abetted by George Robertson and other booksellers and by the Principal Librarian of the then Public Library of New South Wales, H.C.L. Anderson. From the mid-1890s Anderson saw the sense of assisting Mitchell in his collecting rather than unavailingly competing with him.

This must have prompted Mitchell toward his intention, first voiced in 1898, to bequeath his collection to the Public Library on condition that the State Government would provide suitable accommodation for it. The ensuing scandal, culminating in a Parliamentary enquiry, is notorious; after considerable vacillation the Government, shamed by the exhortations of George Robertson, finally moved to build the Mitchell Library.

Mitchell died in July 1907, nine months after the foundation stone of his Library was laid; he bequeathed to the Trustees of the Public Library his entire collection plus an endowment of £70,000. The building to house his collection was opened in March 1910.

Although his collections included many important pictures, Mitchell had not cornered the market in them as he had with books and manuscripts. The terms of his bequest forbade expenditure on pictures. This limitation explicitly shaped the collecting activities of Sir William Dixon.

Dixon (1870-1951) was heir to a tobacco fortune—his family's company eventually became the British-Australasian Tobacco Company Limited—who came from a humane and civilized family environment and, like Mitchell, was a life-long bachelor. Unlike Mitchell, he trained for and practised in a profession, though his work as an engineer soon gave way to involvement in the family business. Again unlike Mitchell, he travelled widely, and his travel diaries and photograph albums are among his collections.

His collecting activity, which began in the late 1890s, was stimulated on the one hand by the time he could devote to it (following a major change in the family business) and on the other by his own research interests, especially in aspects of voyages, navigation, geography and linguistics. Although he endowed money upon numerous institutions, he had always intended that his collections should ultimately go to the Public Library of New South Wales. In 1919 he offered a selection of his historical portraits (subject to an extension of the Library's buildings which, as in Mitchell's case, was sorely delayed). In 1929 the William Dixon Gallery was opened; several further gifts followed; and after his death in 1951 the Library received all of his collections of books, manuscripts, pictures,

coins, maps and other items, together with a bequest of £15,000 and investments valued at £114,000.

Anne Robertson's book is a straightforward account of the history of the two collections and a description of a selection of their "treasures". Her descriptions are adequate, despite an occasionally infelicitous and largely unsparkling style. Many of her selections from the collections are handsomely illustrated, especially the books and pictures. But archivists and manuscript librarians will note with chagrin that documents are apparently unworthy of illustration. The description of John Campbell's 1817 school exercise book is accompanied by a near-irrelevant panorama of Sydney Harbour; Cardinal Gilroy's war diaries are illustrated with a recruiting poster; and there are no illustrations at all to accompany descriptions of Banks's *Endeavour* journal and Bligh's *Bounty* log.

These are sins of omission (venial, perhaps, but sins nonetheless). There are sins of commission, too: an intriguing reference to a rare *Rules of the Melbourne Club* in 1838 (though the Club was not formed until 1839); a confusing discrepancy in the number of paintings on the collector's chest which adorns the book's cover; a determined effort to kill off the (apparently still healthy) Australian Joint Copying Project; and problems with the index.

More seriously, the book seems unbalanced. There is plenty of biographical and descriptive information, but far too little about how the collections have been built and how their contents have acquired. How (and why), for instance, did Dixon obtain the papers of the Queensland and Commonwealth politician and jurist, Sir Samuel Griffiths? How did he acquire his "extensive holdings of official and semi-official papers relating to the early settlement of the Port Phillip district" (p. 127)?

*Treasures of the State Library of New South Wales: the Australian Collections* is not a bad book. It is well presented, visually attractive and useful. But it could have been much, much better.

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**David J. Jones**, *A Source of Inspiration and Delight: The Buildings of the State Library of New South Wales since 1826*. Library Council of New South Wales, 1988. 176pp. ISBN 090844 9240. \$19.95

Today's buildings of the State Library of New South Wales and their predecessors have played an important role in the cultural life of New South Wales. They have housed the rich and diverse resources of the Library's collections, they have been the temporary refuge of the famous and the anonymous alike, and they have been the workplace of many since

1826. David J. Jones' book is timely, not merely because it appeared in the year of the opening of the new Macquarie Street wing, but also because it tells us about the context of the continuing struggle by the Library's staff, governing bodies and supporters to provide adequate accommodation for the collections, users and staff of the Library.

*A Source Of Inspiration And Delight* does not easily fit into a single category—it is part-architectural history, part-institutional history and part-guidebook. It grew from being an updated version of the pamphlet describing the Library's architectural features into a book which also manages to tell the story of how the buildings got there and who the main characters in each of the successive battles were. The author hopes to “set the scene”, to introduce the reader to the Library's buildings, so that they may then be explored and used. The book is divided into eight chapters, the last of which is a guide to the architectural features and main public areas of the Library's buildings.

As befits a publication whose aim is to promote an institution proud of its history, this book is generously illustrated (for the most part from the Library's own sources). The reproductions are good, and the selection varied—exterior and interior scenes; images of some of the important people and events, as well as a few of individual items of visual interest in the Library's collections. There are also scenes of the staff and the users, both of whom are important in the author's tale of the growth of the Library and its services.

The first two chapters describe the genesis and growth of the Library in the nineteenth century. The earliest homes of the Library may not survive, but the scene is indeed set for the events leading to the construction of the buildings seen today on the Macquarie Street site. From the beginning, the Library's administrators have had to fight hard to get adequate accommodation for stack and public areas. They have had to convince different governments of the need to store and care for a public resource which is not always valued highly by the decision-makers of New South Wales themselves. Then there are the economic realities—good library buildings are not cheap and the Library has had to compete with other agencies for a share of the public works vote, often in times of contracting expenditure. It is perhaps not surprising that the happy title comes from a reader (Havelock Ellis) rather than one of the Library's administrators. For many of the latter, the buildings must have been a far more frequent source of frustration and despair than of delight.

In telling the story of the fluctuating fortunes of the Library's quest for a proper home, David J. Jones is able to show us something of the character of the important figures involved, for example H.C.L. Anderson and W.H. Ifould. The tale of Anderson's protracted, but ultimately successful wooing of the Library's greatest benefactor, David Scott Mitchell, is described not just in terms of the relationship between the

two men, but also in the wider context of parliamentary committees and contemporary press comment.

Similarly, the long devotion of Ifould to the cause of the appropriate enlargement of the Mitchell Wing and his securing of the adjacent site for that purpose, are warmly sketched. Ifould's involvement in the idea and design of the bronze entrance doors provides an interesting sidelight on issues of public taste in the 1930's and 1940's and notions of appropriate decoration for library buildings. Here, in this phase of the Library's history, we are once again made aware of the importance of private benefactors. Without them, the interiors of the familiar sandstone building facing the Botanic Gardens (now referred to as the Shakespeare Place building) would have been much less fascinating.

The author's enthusiasm for the newest building, the Macquarie Street building, with which he was closely involved as Building Project Co-ordinator for several years, comes across very clearly in Chapter 7. He describes both the construction and the uses of the building, and how these relate to the older building, so different in concept and appearance. His purpose is partly to demonstrate that the new building is truly "a very public building", and not a cool culture palace which keeps the public at arm's length. He is also concerned to show that the Library's services have developed to match recent technological changes, and that the new building caters for these as well as traditional services. In this chapter, the author pays tribute to the work of the Government Architect's Branch in the design and construction of the new building. The role of this agency is central to the whole history of the Library's buildings, suggesting that this is an area for further investigation. It would be interesting to know, for example, whether the Government Architect's Branch has many other clients of such long standing whose changing needs have been met with such apparent success.

Of course, David J. Jones cannot comment on how the building will work in the long term, but it is to be hoped that this peak in the Library's history will not be followed by any later troughs of "dingy caverns" or "no more room". There remain tales to be told of important battles in the most recent struggle, for example, the difficulties of convincing the powers that be that space must be allowed for the collections to grow (even though this might mean under-used stack areas in the short term).

*A Source Of Inspiration And Delight* is a good narrative account of one library's efforts to secure buildings which will house collections and attract both scholars and recreational users. It raises questions about the availability of similar publications on archives buildings in Australia. The successes of the State Libraries of New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland in building programmes in recent years have brought improved conditions for archival materials held in those institutions. State Libraries are perceived to have cultural value in our society, and their

struggle for accommodation have been long and difficult. But what of suitable buildings for archives? Archives generally have less recognition from public and politicians. Warehouses might suffice for temporary records, but unless there is a marked change in the appreciation of the cultural significance of archives, it is likely that the struggle for appropriate archives buildings will continue to be at a much slower pace than that for their sister institutions, the libraries.

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